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PROPOSALS FOR REVISIONS IN THE PRE-SERVICE REQUIREMENTS FOR
ENGLISH MAJORS.

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DESPITE RECENT RESEARCH IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND
LANGUAGE, COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR ENGLISH MAJORS IN
PHILIPPINE TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES HAVE REMAINED RELATIVELY
STATIC THE PAST 15 YEARS. TO REDUCE THE WIDENING GAP BETWEEN
TEACHER TRAINING INSTRUCTION AND THE FUNCTIONS TEACHERS ARE
ACTUALLY EXPECTED TO PERFORM, MANILA HIGH SCHOOL SUPERVISORS
STUDIED PRE-SERVICE COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR ENGLISH MAJORS
AND PROPOSED REVISIONS IN THESE REQUIREMENTS. PROPOSALS
INCLUDED THE ADDITION OF COURSES IN--(1) PRONUMCIATION, BASED
ON CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SOUND SYSTEMS OF ENGLISH AND
MAJOR FILIPINO LANGUAGES, (2) RAPID READING AND COMPREHENSION
OF EXPOSITORY PROSE, (3) MODERN ENGLISH GRAMMAR AND
LINGUISTICS, (4) THE LEARNING AND TEACHING OF A FOREIGN
LANGUAGE, USING SCIENTIFICALLY PREPARED LANGUAGE-TEACHING
MATERIALS, (5) LANGUAGE TESTING, (6) THE DETECTION AND
REMEDICATION OF READING DEFECTS, (7) COMPOSITION AND
LITERATURE, WHICH ARE SEQUENTIALLY DEVELOPED AND EMPHASIZE
CLOSE READING AND THE NEW CRITICISM, (8) MYTHOLOGICAL
BACKGROUNDS OF LITERATURE, INCLUDING FILIPINO LEGENDS, AND
(9) CULTURAL BACKGROUND, CONTAINING A GOOD SELECTION OF
PHILIPPINE LITERATURE IN ENGLISH. IMPLEMENTING THE PROPOSALS
FOR CURRICULAR REVISION WOULD ALSO INVOLVE THE UPDATING OF
EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY COURSES AND A RE-EVALUATION OF
EXISTING PRACTICE TEACHING CONDITIONS. (THIS ARTICLE APPEARED
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PROPOSALS FOR REVISIONS IN THE PRE-SERVICE REQUIREMENTS FOR ENGLISH MAJORS

Laura S. Oloroso

Teachers are the keystone of the educational arch. We can build new universities and pack them with thousands of students. We can establish technical colleges; we can design modern schools and equip them with the latest gadgets; we can formulate an entirely new concept of secondary education; without an adequate supply of teachers of quality, the whole structure will fall to the ground.

The best place to begin in improving the Philippine educational system is in teacher training. We cannot have a first-rate system of education and a strong democracy without a first-class group of teachers and we cannot get such a group of teachers until we improve our teacher-training programs.

What are the realities we face insofar as the pre-service training and selection of the present supply of teachers as well as the manner in which they obtain civil service eligibility are concerned?

1. Judging from the lists of courses appearing in the transcripts of the great majority of applicants for English in the Division of City Schools, Manila, course requirements for English majors have remained static since the advent of TESL in the Philippines in the early 1950's. Except for "Speech Improvement" and the creeping in of a one-semester course listed variously as "Filipino Literature" (not in English) "Oriental Literature" or "Masterpieces of Asian Literature", the only other changes are the two legislated into these requirements through the Rizal Law and alas, the Spanish Law.
2. There is hardly any selective enrolment in most of our colleges of education. Even students getting border-line grades in the old basic English courses are allowed to major in English. Many bright students avoid teaching as a career.
3. The civil service examinations given to entitle applicants for English to eligibility and permanent status are getting to be more and more general in nature. An English major is not tested for her productive mastery of English, either oral or written, nor for her knowledge of the latest developments in foreign language

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teaching. To make matters worse, reports of widespread cheating and peddling of examination questions have made many school people wonder if the money that goes down the drain each time an examination is cancelled would not be better spent setting up another leakproof system of selection.

We will limit ourselves in this paper to a discussion of the first item in our enumeration.

All these years, those of us who are responsible for the continuing education of teachers in the service may have abrogated our responsibility for seeing to it that the gap between the pre-service training of teachers and their actual needs in the service does not become wider than it has been traditionally. Without exculpating ourselves from our share of the blame for the kind of high-school graduates we send to college, we are stretching a hand out to those who run our colleges of education in an attempt to do something about a situation that cries for correction.

A news item from a Canadian newspaper recently circulated by the Secretary of Education dramatizes this situation. It says in part, "They (the 100 Filipinos now teaching in Canada) have a university degree from the Philippines which is equivalent to about half a degree here... Some Philippino (*sic*) teachers have been good but on the average they have been pretty bad." Many of our countrymen probably share this opinion.

Judging from the evidence we have collected during the last ten years—test scores, compositions, answers to questions asked during hundreds of interviews with applicants—many questions need to be asked about the relevance of the contents of present curricula and the procedures now being used in training teachers for the functions which they have to perform when they teach.

To begin with, we need to revise our ideas about what a curriculum is. The idea that it is a dynamic, changing thing needs to be driven home with greater force to those who are charged with the job of curriculum planning who should then translate the idea into action, for how can we improve our language, math and science programs with course requirements for teacher trainees which have changed only to accommodate subjects legislated into them? How much the stagnation of the curricula in the teachers' courses have contributed to their unpopularity, no one can say with certainty, but the suspicion that this stagnation has been partly to blame for the deglamorization of teaching as a career cannot just be shrugged off.

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What must applicants for teaching positions in the public high schools of Manila feel when they are asked if they have taken a course in TESL or in the new-type language tests or if they have heard about minimal pairs, contrastive analysis or the IPA, and they can only shake their heads sadly?

How are teacher trainees helped to put into practice what they hear about individual differences and variables in learners? With the population explosion, we can ill-afford to merely continue paying lip service to the knowledge that human beings learn in different ways and at different speeds. Many new teachers seem prepared only to say "My students are very poor," or "I have the lowest sections," or "Section 1 finished the lesson in much less time than section 4." When in college do we train teachers to guide very bright learners and to help the disadvantaged?

How can English majors teach reading well when they are not required to take a single course in the teaching of reading or in the causes and remediation of reading defects? How can they teach writing well when some of them haven't been taught to write well themselves?

We talk about preserving our cultural heritage but many English majors have not read Nick Joaquin. Only one or two of the more than 100 applicants we tested last year knew the author of *Faith in the Filipino*.

Where in the training of students now enrolled in our colleges of education are they taught the psychology of language learning and the psychology of adolescence?

Is there any synchronization of the training given in our colleges of education and actual teaching practice in the "training" departments of these colleges?

What special training have critic teachers had in the supervision and guidance of teacher trainees? What provisions are made for the continuing growth of these critic teachers in the service?

When viewed against all the changes made during the last 15 years in other courses, the conservatism and the lack of daring and imagination evident in the unrealistic curricula of our colleges of education stand out all the more. Present course requirements are cluttered with titles of courses that give away their vintage.

Take the most common patterns of course work for English majors, for instance.

The tabulation below shows the "first language-ness" of the training obtained by many English majors in our country today. Under this tabulation is a list of courses offered in the English Teacher Training Department in Afghanistan. A comparison of the courses in this tabulation and those which Afghan teachers of English have to take shows that while the latter are being exposed to the latest developments in foreign language teaching, at the undergraduate level, we are still securely moored, in a manner of speaking, to pre-World War II requirements, except for "Speech Improvement," "Filipino Literature," and "Elements of Literary Criticism." Incidentally, the course named "Filipino Literature" in A is more of a survey course in which literary history gets considerable attention, than one in which a fairly good acquaintance with the best works of our best writers in English may be acquired.

Common Patterns of Course Work for English Majors in the Philippines

A	B	C	D
E 0 — Conversational English	E ₁ College Composition	E ₁ English Composition	E ₁ Freshman English
E 1a — Freshman English	E ₂ College Composition	E ₂ English Composition	E ₂ Freshman English
E 1b — Freshman English	E ₁₅ Survey of American Literature	E ₃ Public Speaking	E ₃ Introduction to Literature
E 2 — Advanced Composition	E ₄ Argumentation and Debate	E ₄ Business English Correspondence	E ₁₀ Survey of English and American Literature
E 5 — English Literature	E ₇ Phonetics	E ₅ Essay Writing	Speech 1 — Fundamentals of Speech
E 14 — Fundamentals of English	E ₅ Public Speaking	E ₄ Expository Writing	Comparative Lit. 110 — Philippine Literature in English
E 6 — American Literature	E ₅ Expository Writing	E ₇ English Literature I	E ₁₁₅ From the Norman Conquest to Caxton
E 9a — World Literature	E ₂₂ Children's Literature	E ₈ English Literature II	E ₁₂₀ Wyatt to Milton
E 13 — Romantic and Victorian Age	E ₂₃ School Library	E ₁₄ The Age of Romanticism	E ₁₁₃ An Introduction to the English Language
E 17a — Effective Speech	E _{21-B} Business Letters, Forms and Reports	E ₁₅ The Victorian Age	E ₁₀₆ Fundamentals of Journalism
E 9b — World Literature	E ₂₃ Unified Phonics Method	E ₁₇ The Short Story	Comparative Lit. 104 — Masterpieces of Ancient Literature
E 12 — Modern Catholic Writers	E ₂₁ Mythological Backgrounds of Literature	E ₁₁ Contemporary Literature	E ₁₅ Elements of Literary Criticism and of Book Reviewing
E 10 — Shakespeare	E ₆ Oral Interpretation of Literature	E ₁₃ The Novel	E ₁₂₃ Wordsworth to Scott
E 17b — Workshop in English	E ₂₁ Teacher's Course in High School English	E ₁₆ The Elizabethan Era	E ₂₂ Introduction to Shakespeare
E 4 — Literary Criticism		E ₂₃ Literary Criticism	E ₁₂₆ Research and Thesis Writing
E 11 — Contemporary English and American Writers		E ₂₂ Voice and Diction	
E 21 — Filipino Literature			

Courses Taught in the English Teacher Training Department in Afghanistan

Intensive Review of Spoken English. This is a conditioning course which encourages a thorough and systematic mastery of the common English speech patterns by means of the automatic control of basic structural signals of pronunciation and grammar.

Reading Comprehension. A course designed to familiarize students with modern concepts of reading practice which will enable them to read a variety of English materials efficiently, but with particular emphasis on contemporary expository prose.

Introduction to the Study of Language. A course designed to enable students to study and discuss the phenomena of language in a scientific manner. An introduction to modern concepts of the nature of language and human communication. Emphasis upon selected applications of linguistics to language teaching, materials preparation and curriculum.

Introduction to Linguistics. An introduction to the science of linguistics, problems in phonology, morphology, syntax and comparative studies. Practice in techniques of language analysis and comparison. Examination of applications of linguistics to foreign language teaching, materials preparation and curriculum development.

Structure of English. A study of the structure of American English including its morphology, syntax and usage. Special attention given to a comparison of Dari (Persian), Pashto and English structure with the intent of improving the students' use of written English.

Language Testing. A course designed to provide a comprehensive introduction to the construction and use of various types of language tests which incorporate modern linguistic knowledge.

Introduction to Literature. An introductory course in the study of the major literary genre: short story, essay, biography, drama, novel and poetry. Emphasis on selections from modern American and British literature with supplementary readings from other literatures in English translation.

Introduction to Asian and European Literature. A course introducing Asian and European literature in English translation with some emphasis on readings from British literature. The main purpose of the course is to familiarize the students with the quality, variety and universality of human experience.

American Literature. A survey course of modern American literature designed to familiarize students with the cultural heritage of the United States. Special emphasis will be placed on the role of literature as a reflector of the cultural atmosphere of a region.

Introduction to Composition. A course designed to acquaint students with the different types of sentence structure used in simple expository prose, and with the elements of paragraph development. Extensive prac-

tice is given in the writing of simple but well-developed paragraphs on topics ranging from impressions of informal social situations to discussions of formal academic experience.

Intermediate Composition. A course in the development of themes, with emphasis on planning and on the concepts of unity, order and coherence. Students learn to prepare working outlines and to write well-organized themes of approximately 500 words.

Advanced Composition and Guided Research. A course in which students learn techniques for defining and limiting a research problem; collecting, evaluating, and organizing data; and preparing and documenting a research report.

Methods and Materials in the Teaching of English in the Middle Schools. A course designed to enable students to think critically about the objectives and methods appropriate to teaching English in the 7th, 8th and 9th grades and to master the content of the materials used at this level of instruction.

Methods and Materials in the Teaching of English in the Secondary Schools. A course similar to the one above but using the materials appropriate for teaching English in the 10th, 11th and 12th grades.

Methods Seminar. A course given in conjunction with practice teaching to give the students opportunity to discuss day-to-day classroom problems and various approaches to their solution. The students receive guidance through supervision and individual group conferences.

An ironic twist is provided by the fact that while we have at least four up-to-date graduate programs for teachers of English in the Philippines—at the Philippine Normal College, the University of the Philippines, the Ateneo de Manila University and lately, at De La Salle College, requirements at the undergraduate level have hardly changed. Even the Afghans, with their solid undergraduate background, come to the Graduate School in Linguistics at the Philippine Normal College to round out their training and to the Division of City Schools and Quezon City to observe classes taught the second-language way.

In an attempt to reduce the gap between teacher-training programs at the undergraduate level and actual practice, the high-school supervisors of the Division of City Schools, Manila, made a study of pre-service course requirements for majors in their respective subject fields along the lines indicated by these questions:

1. Have pre-service course requirements for majors in your subject changed at all during the last ten years? Which of the present course requirements have outlived their usefulness in your opinion and how?
2. What changes, if any, would you propose to reduce the wide gap between pre-service training and the actual needs of new teachers in the service? These changes could take the form of:
 - a. Substituting badly-needed newer courses for obsolete ones
 - b. Overhauling or modifying the content of some courses
 - c. Combining or fusing some courses to make room for others
 - d. Rearranging course requirements for a more meaningful sequence
 - e. Increasing emphasis on some courses and de-emphasizing others
 - f. Making improvements in the practice-teaching requirements
 - g. Making the requirements more responsive to Filipino needs and cultural patterns
 - h. Changing the pattern of the education course—for instance, requiring two years of liberal arts training and three years of specialization¹
3. The latest references on teacher training and supervision say that a teacher's main job today is not so much to impart information as to train students in "learning to learn." How in present pre-service requirements for majors in your subject is this conditioning given, if at all?

At a seminar held at the Padre Gomez Elementary School the first two weeks of May, the supervisors presented the results of their studies in the form of proposals for the revision of pre-service requirements for teachers of the various high school subjects to an audience consisting of representatives of the Bureau of Private Schools, some heads of teacher-training institutions in Manila, high-school principals, supervisors and department heads. The proposals for English are listed below:

Proposals for Revisions in the Course Requirements for English Majors

- I. Replace the old speech courses with at least two intensive pronunciation courses based on a contrastive analysis of the sound

¹ In the two examinations given to non-eligible applicants in June, three of the top ten scores were obtained by A.B. holders who had obtained some education units.

system of English and the sound systems of the major Filipino languages such as Tagalog, Hiligaynon, Cebuano and Ilocano.

These courses should lead to:

- A. Sufficient mastery of the sound system of English to enable the teacher trainee to be a tolerably good model, one without too much of a regional accent.
- B. Mastery of either the IPA or the Trager-Smith system of transcription. With this tool, the teacher trainee can avail herself of the materials found in the latest references on the sound system of English, consult a good pronouncing dictionary such as Kenyon and Knott's **Pronouncing Dictionary of American English**, and use the system of transcription as a visual aid when she needs to.
- C. Knowledge of the items in the sound system of English in which the interference of native language habits will be greatest.
- D. Sufficient knowledge of articulatory phonetics to be able to use simple instructions in helping weak students over their pronunciation defects.

Towards the end of the second course, some practice in choral reading of verse might be included. Carefully selected dialogues may be practised on, too, in these two courses.

If enrolments warrant it, only those who get an average of "2" or "B" in these courses should be allowed to major in English.

II. Include an intensive fast-reading course in the freshman year that will provide much practice in the efficient comprehension of modern expository prose dealing with a wide variety of subjects.

III. Replace the old grammar courses with two courses in modern English grammar and the structure of English.

IV. Include an Introduction to Linguistics. Start the course with a study of the nature of language. Gear the linguistics part of the course to Filipino needs and problems.

V. Require a course in the learning and teaching of a foreign language and the application of the principles of TESL at the high

school level. Include observation of a teacher who uses these principles with a fair degree of success at the beginning of the course and inspection of scientifically prepared language-teaching materials so that the principles of TESL can be discovered.

- VI. Require at least two carefully spiralled writing (composition) courses that start with creative imitation and expansion of sentences and culminate in mastery of the paragraph (at least)—not a theoretical but real, productive mastery of it. Scrap essay and short-story writing for all but the brightest English majors.

Make evaluation of compositions an important part of these two courses.

- VII. Introduce a course in the teaching of reading in English to Filipino high-school students and in detecting the causes of reading defects, particularly in a second-language situation, as well as ways of providing remedial instruction. Develop awareness of how ability to read in the native language can interfere with or speed up the acquisition of reading skills in the second language in this course.

This course should acquaint teacher trainees with the particular reading skills needed in various subjects and should include examination of reading materials in English for non-native speakers.

- VIII. Make a course in the mythological backgrounds of literature a prerequisite to the other literature courses. Include Filipino legends (a comparative study, maybe) in the Fansler, Ramos and Arguilla collections.

- IX. Re-organize literature courses so that more training in close reading or reading in depth of well-selected examples of various literary genre is given in each course and contemporary literature is well enough represented. Expose majors to the "new" criticism.

Comment: Present period and survey courses do not give this training. Many BSE graduates know only a few biographical facts and some literary history.

- X. Instead of the survey of Philippine Literature, teach a good selection of Philippine Literature in English with special emphasis on the short story in which our writers have achieved

notable success. (One possibility: a comparative study of the Filipino short story in English and of short stories written by foreigners.)

XI. Set up a course on Philippine Thought from Rizal's Time to the Present using essays and speeches in English by Filipinos. Include readings from Nick Joaquin, H. de la Costa, Manglapus, Claro M. Recto and the three hyphenated women writers—Carmen Guerrero-Nakpil, Kerima Polotan-Tuvera and Gilda Cordeiro-Fernando, among others.

XII. Offer a full course on Nick Joaquin—his poems, play, essays (a selection of Quijano de Manila's and the earlier ones), legends, short stories, novel.

XIII. Take a long hard look at practice teaching as conducted at present and, if more progressive critic teachers cannot be found, replace practice teaching with course work. Explore the possibility of coordinating teaching practice in university, grade and high school departments and theory taught in colleges of education.

XIV. Require a course in language testing that will expose teacher trainees to the new-type language tests. Lado's *Language Testing* can serve as one of the textbooks for this course. Give tests for reading and literature, too, some attention. Include inspection and preparation of such tests.

Right now, this course is taught in the graduate schools of at least two local universities, but we cannot wait until graduate school for such a course.

The education courses and courses in psychology too, need to be re-evaluated. Dewey no longer looms as large as he used to and even theories of learning have changed. Some exposure to psycholinguistics might help our language teachers get rid of unscientific notions about language teaching and make them more scientific in their approach to problems in this field.

That our appeal for the "updating" of pre-service requirements for teachers has not fallen on deaf ears is proved by some of the letters in the "In Our Mail" section of this issue. We are pinning our hopes on the writers of these letters for the kind of leadership that will make it possible for our classroom teachers to relate instruction in school meaningfully to present-day needs.